

## Student Riparian Planting

On April 23, 2008, 48 students from the Titusville High School, arrived by bus to the Doug Price property located in Crawford County, in Northwestern PA. The students, grades 9-12, came ready to work. The job consisted of planting 500 hardwood trees and 400 shrubs to stabilize a riparian zone along a portion of French Creek that had been steadily eroding the landowner's property, and to enhance a wetland area on another section of the property. This land is enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP).

This is the seventh project site that Patricia McKellop, the Biology/Ecology teacher at Titusville H.S., and her students have participated in. When asked why she keeps bringing her students to these riparian planting sites, her reply was, "The students ask me every year where we are planting trees. They want to come and do these projects. So I make sure that happens." She said the riparian plantings complement her topics discussed during class and also she wants her students to learn the importance of volunteering, and giving back to the environment.



The students love to be able to get out of the classroom and actually apply what they are learning. One student, senior Ross Pringle, said this was the first time he participated in a riparian tree planting. "I want to major in this field in college and I wanted to get a feel for this kind of work to see what it's all about." Another student, Lori Hopkins, has participated in several plantings. "It makes me feel good to be doing something for the environment and I like nature and being outside." All of the students agreed that they love to get out of the classroom for the day, even when it involves a lot of hard work.



Many agencies came together to participate in this planting project. The Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Crawford Conservation District, the DCNR's Bureau of Forestry, the Farm Service Agency, and the Allegheny

College Creek Connections all lent a helping hand in making sure this project ran smoothly and was a good learning experience for the students. The landowner was overwhelmed with the

hard work and dedication the students showed throughout the day and was very impressed with how quickly they planted so many trees and shrubs. We all look forward to working with them in the future on another riparian project site.

